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ABSTRACT

A project was conducted to build motivation and increase language arts skills of disadvantaged students through involvement in a career exploration program. A class of 28 students reviewed career clusters and indicated their personal interest. Employed representatives from the community with backgrounds similar to the students' visited the classroom and discussed their roles, jobs, and responsibilities. Following the classroom visit, small groups of students visited the job sites of those who had visited the classroom. The students made notes and took pictures; these comments and photographs were then prepared as stories intended for compilation in booklet form for use by other students. Although the project was not completed in terms of developing the reading booklets and a subsequent evaluation, it was recommended that the process implemented for this type of direct experience be encouraged. (Author/RG)

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A CREATIVE CAREER EDUCATION LANGUAGE ARTS PROJECT

FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

CAREER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

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AREA III

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VT-103-381

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OE 009 049

FINAL REPORT

A Creative Career Education Language Arts Project

For The Disadvantaged

Jane Staver
Project Director

Area III
Portland Public Schools

March 1976

Grant No. 26-001-293
State Department of Education
Community Colleges and Career Education
Exemplary Project

A MEMORIAL

During the course of this project its director, Jane Staver, became seriously ill and during December, 1975 passed away. Ms. Staver had been a special education teacher at Boise School for six years. During that time her associates came to recognize her as a master teacher and appreciated her depth of thought and willingness to confront difficult educational issues. Throughout her illness the project was in Ms. Staver's thoughts. One of her final goals was to guide it to its completion but death intervened. This publication stands as a memorial to the optimism and professionalism of a true educator, Jane Staver.

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Spring, 1976

To: All Concerned Educators

From: David E. Lindstrom

This publication represents the final effort of Jane Staver to find a way to reach into the center milieu of nonmotivated students and to transform them into participating learners. The planned outcome of the project, which will be described, may seem to be of very high expectation. However, this was Jane's method of operation. She believed that students would achieve more if their goal was barely within their grasp than if it was confined to their immediate attainment.

As my responsibility at Boise School had been largely centered in curriculum management for grades five through eight, Jane discussed her ideas with me for several years before submitting a proposal. At the time she was ready to draft a project outline, Jane found ready backing from the principal of Boise, Dave McCrea and from Area III's career education specialist, Warren Rathbun. Both of these men were intrigued with the project's potential and they had great respect for Jane's professionalism and vitality. It was these men who asked me to prepare this report.

Even though Jane was a special education teacher, the project's target group was to be a classroom of seventh and eighth grade students representing the normal expectations within the school. Upon the project's approval, she found active support from one of Boise's upper grade teachers, Norvella Long. Ms. Long agreed to have her split seventh and eighth grade class used as the project's target class. Norvella played a valuable role through her insights into student needs and thinking.

Jane would have wanted a special thanks given to the following staff members and resource people for lending willing assistance to the effort.

Norvella Long, teacher, Boise Elementary School
Delores Leggroan, community agent, Boise Elementary School
David Small, teacher, Benson High School
Jette Wilde and Ms. Brown, Fish and Game Commission
Rufus Fuller, Tri-Met
Thomas Williams, owner, contracting business
Manuel Scott, owner, Coastal Janitorial Service
Mr. Dale, owner, Dale's Catering Service
Gail Washington, Kaiser Clinic
Walter Morris, personnel, Post Office
Daniel Hayes, regional illustrator, Fish and Wildlife Division, Department of Interior
William Denton, Bonneville Power Administration
Ms. Willie Dechard, Personnel Officer, First National Bank
Bob Steen, personnel, Multnomah County Civil Service

DEL:fc

ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT

A. Project Background

Title: A Creative Career Education Language Arts Project For The Disadvantaged

Institution: Boise Elementary School
District No. 1, Multnomah County

Jane Staver
Project Director

Address: 620 N. Fremont
Portland, Oregon 97227

Ph.288-6309

Project Duration: July 1, 1974 - June 30, 1975
Special Extension: July 1, 1975 - March 31, 1976

Costs: State	District No. 1	District No. 1, Area III	Total
$6851.00	$832.00	$693.00	$8376.00

Number of Students Affected: 28. Number of Staff Involved: 5.

B. Project Description

The learning deficiencies demonstrated by students in schools such as Boise are viewed as indicators of a lack of motivation resulting in low achievement reading skills. These skills are vital for students when they must plan for a career. The project followed a process which was hoped to build motivation and consequently increase reading skills through a carefully developed career exploration program.

C. Purpose

The project was to provide situations whereby students could write about their experiences from the career exploration involvement. The intent was for the written material to be printed in booklet form to serve as alternative material for reading programs. Content of the reading books was to reflect the insights and usage patterns of those students who developed the material. This factor would attract them to students in other schools similar to Boise.

D. Outcome

The result of the project does not reflect the intended outcome. Because of the project director's death the reading booklets were not produced. Instead, a process was developed that could eventually lead to the intent of the project.

E. Major Project Activities

1. Students reviewed career clusters and indicated their personal interest.
2. Individuals representing agencies, business firms and owners of businesses discussed their roles, jobs and responsibilities with the participating students in their classroom.
3. Small groups of students visited the job sites of those who visited the classroom. On these occasions they kept notes and took corresponding photographs of on-site situations to illustrate their written material.
4. The students developed their notes and photographs into stories for use in the reading booklets.

PROJECT GOALS

1. Student/Teacher teams will research appropriate reading materials to ameliorate the problems in Career Education for disadvantaged 7th and 8th grade students at Boise School.

2. Student/Teacher teams will develop appropriate reading materials to ameliorate the problems in Career Education for disadvantaged 7th and 8th grade students at Boise School.

3. Student/Teacher teams will produce appropriate reading materials to ameliorate the problems in Career Education for disadvantaged 7th and 8th grade students at Boise School.

4. Student/Teacher teams will use appropriate reading materials to ameliorate the problems in Career Education for disadvantaged 7th and 8th grade students at Boise School.

5. Student/Teacher teams will evaluate the appropriate reading materials they have produced to ameliorate the problems in Career Education for disadvantaged 7th and 8th grade students at Boise School.

6. Portland Public School Teachers will be able to use the product so that they may know the developed Career Education concepts incorporated within the materials.

Jane Staver
Project Director

PROJECT PURPOSE

The project was designed to stimulate interest in learning, especially reading and careers in terms of awareness and exploration. To many individuals these goals seem to be an expected and normal outcome of education. While this is true, there are a great variety of responses by students to these expectations. They range from eagerness and resourcefulness to passivity and neglect. Educators are becoming more and more concerned when they observe the latter group of students who are neither motivated to learn nor have even a semblance of reasonable career goals. It was this condition and the lack of appropriate instructional materials that prompted the project.

Stimulating learning and providing realistic career concepts for unmotivated students has been a continuous frustration for decades. During recent years our nations's developing, poignant social awakening has finally brought deserved focus on the problem. Numerous energies have been directed to a solution, but convincing answers remain elusive. That educators can work in this atmosphere of contradictions and remain optimistic is a wonder. But it does happen. It was from just such an atmosphere that this project arose. It can be assumed that this project was to be an antidote for the malady of: too much money being spent on perpetuating conventional methods with unmotivated students in a traditional, unimaginative way. What was needed, the project implied, was a curriculum that presented not only a writing-reading skills base, but an active participation in those experiences so often circumvented by misdirected students. These experiences, which quietly influence the mind in terms of learning motivation and career choice, had to be provided if realistic goals were to be acquired.

Activity-centered Procedures

A keynote of the project was direct experiences. It was thought that many kinds of repeated experiences should be provided to promote optimum motivation and practical activities. The media carrying all the experimental activities was a reading text describing various career exploratory experiences for upper grade elementary students. The textbook was written by upper grade students in the form of a continuous record of their views of various careers and its entry requirements. The students' textbook was to reflect natural, identifiable student language patterns and vocabulary. These would have been reoccurring phrases, distinctive usage practices and use of a selective vocabulary. Such a reader would assist a broad range of students unfamiliar with the project's process of reflecting upon the meaning of learning and the need for achievable career goals. It was thought that perhaps students could communicate with peers in their own language styles better than an adult viewing their needs from a distance. There was also a hope that once the students participating in the process developed appropriate use of career vocabulary in their writing they could use this basic vocabulary in writing additional reading material without the detailed involvement of this project's procedures.

For the proper perspective it must be remembered that for the participating students the process was more important than the product. Additionally, a major goal of the project was to validate the process for continued use among unmotivated students. Then, after several years of replication a sizable collection of useful, career-oriented readers would be available for upper grade elementary students.

The project's design provided many activities for the students. They participated in carefully prepared career exploration experiences. The

project director with the assistance of the school's community agent searched the community for firms which were operated by individuals, who as youngsters, had a similar background to the participating students. Secondly, large companies and government agencies were approached and asked if they had employees from similar backgrounds who could assist in the project. Once these individuals were identified, the project director developed a schedule covering the first half of the school year which provided the involvement of one firm or agency per week.

Background of the Process

Prior to any involvement with students, representatives from all the firms and agencies attended a meeting at the school with the project director, community agent and the participating teacher. This session was designed to inform the cooperating representatives of the project's purpose and of their role. The first meeting occurred in August, 1974 and a second session took place just after school started. This was a dinner meeting designed to strengthen the tie between the project and the representatives. In most instances the representatives attending both sessions were the persons involved with the students during the following weeks. These personnel ranged from employees to owner's of firms and managers in large corporations and agencies. The one common characteristic of the representatives was their deep interest in helping students with similar backgrounds to work toward setting and achieving realistic career goals.

Participants were oriented to the program and were informed of their role in the project. As the various career clusters were described by the teacher, the students were asked to tentatively select the cluster of greatest interest to them. As different careers were presented, students

were asked to take special note of their interests within that cluster.[1] Once the students understood the project and were introduced to a series of career clusters, the business representatives began to participate.

At the beginning of each week the classroom teacher and project director often teamed up in their introduction to the job exploration experience for that week. They asked the students to form questions for the representatives who would subsequently talk about certain jobs. In addition, the group discussed typical entry requirements for a particular job. When the speaker arrived, the students had background knowledge of his/her job. Most of the representatives were very open with the students and answered personal questions, such as how much money they made. The students' prepared questions were used as a gauge of their understanding of the career under study. After the session, each pupil filled out an evaluation of the speaker.[2] In addition to evaluating the speaker, the students were asked to indicate the major things they learned from his/her visit.

Small groups of students visited a particular firm or agency that had presented a career orientation. This was regarded as a follow-up to the speaker's appearance in the class. During these visits the students took notes on points of interest and, as each was issued an instamatic type camera, took corresponding pictures. Upon returning from a field visit, a class debriefing was held. After this, the class wrote their impressions of either the speaker's visit or of their visit to a firm or agency. They wrote about their conclusions concerning a job, including factual information of importance to themselves. These were placed in a file for future use by

[1]The students' responses were not recorded in a formal way.

[2]Please see the appendix.

the students.

Within this round of activity, students especially interested in photography were periodically taken to a nearby high school and trained in dark room procedures. In this phase they developed the pictures taken by the students during the visits. This activity took place after school and usually the project director took them to the photo lab.

As the series of speakers and visits was to be completed within the first half of the school year, the students were to spend the second half in preparing their written impressions and information for the readers. While not completed, much of this phase was accomplished. The students took their original written statements from the file and matched these with the photographs. Then they began the task of rewriting the material. During this time typewriters were always available in the back of the classroom. This was begun after the students received six lessons in the use of the typewriter. The machines were enjoyed by the students. This activity appeared to encourage them to be more accurate in their usage and spelling of words. The knowledge that perhaps their photograph and accompanying statement might be used in a reader also produced greater thoroughness. This, of course, was held up as an important attribute for a successful career.

Assessment of Project Goals

Evaluation was an integral part of the project although it was impossible to perform a complete summative evaluation. A major consideration was whether or not the intense effort in career exploration followed by the vigorous writing effort would actually help the students read better. While

the project's six goals do not stipulate this outcome, it was implied. To determine if this supposition was true, a multiple-choice, career-centered reading test[3] was developed. This test was administered concurrently with the Portland District's achievement testing schedule. This process provided two sets of scores: one of them related to careers and the other to general knowledge. In comparing both sets of scores, fall and spring, there were slight gains in the career-centered reading test while there was a similar decline in the METRO reading test.

	Fall	Spring		Fall	Spring
Career-centered test	23.1 6.48 SD	26.3 7.419	METRO reading test	37.38 4.85 SD	35.5 7.65 SD

The career-centered test scores are raw score means for project students at Boise School. The METRO test scores are standard score means for this particular group of students at Boise. It was thought that any increase in the career-centered test scores might have some bearing on the students' achievement on the METRO test. However, this did not happen in the statistical sense. Although the difference between the fall and spring scores for the career-centered test were not statistically significant, the students may have placed more importance on that test.

Several other evaluation devices were used in the early stages of the project but the director's illness prevented their continuation. One instrument was designed to evaluate attitudes toward learning and work, while a second one was to have measured motivation. This evaluation procedure was important because the project's goals implied that its activities would

[3]Reading test was developed by Boise School staff.

promote the development of positive attitudes and motivation to set realistic career goals. Early plans were laid to adopt an attitude inventory used in the first instrument. An attitude inventory was adopted from a local high school career education program. However, this form was not developed. This was to be given during the beginning and end of the project.

Motivation was defined as participation, observable interest shown in activities, interviews, classroom tasks and asking questions of speakers. Students were rated by the project director and/or the cooperating teacher on a scale of one to five. The demonstration of tasks completed and participation was rated five at its highest level and one of mere presence at the activity was noted. Other details concerning the criteria for rating levels of motivation were not available.

Summary

In making a final review of the project, it can be said that much of the process as outlined in the original project was carried out. The class orientations and consequent visitations were performed according to plan but their evaluation in terms of student motivation was incomplete. Although students did considerable writing, the students' readers were not completely developed. It is also difficult to determine if the samples of the students' writing are actually in the expected format. If the process was replicated with a similar group of students it might prove to be a worthwhile process. A replication would also allow for verifying the notion that student-written readers are more informative and a more interesting way for their peers to learn about careers.

Recommendations

1. Career education specialists and teachers interested in pursuing exploration of careers with upper elementary students should not take for granted that typical children of this age group understand specialized career-oriented vocabulary. As the samples of the students' work points out, they had to do much paraphrasing of what they had heard. This translation process is a necessary responsibility of the teacher working with students recording their understanding of the content and direction given by adults who glibly use a specialized vocabulary. The "debriefing" process used in this project exemplifies the detail and care that must be employed to help students make this translation from the practitioner's lips to the student's notebook.
2. The career education assessment done periodically by teachers, principals and career education specialists should not overlook the student. Too often these assessments are program-directed rather than student-centered. Before involvement in a project of this sort is carried out, carefully implemented assessment of students' knowledge of limited aspects of career exploration should be conducted. Such an assessment would probably yield insights for a relatively modest list of objectives and expectations of students.
3. A field-centered activity, such as the Boise project, should be encouraged in rural, suburban and urban settings for relatively shorter time spans. There is great value in involving students in

research, study, reading and personal contacts with adults outside the school to promote more practical uses of basic language skills.

The use of laboratory, simulated experiences can be carried on at the school. In this setting reading, research skills, speech-making and speech and writing evaluation can be done with career-related content. The extension of these, and questioning and comprehension skills in relationship with persons, places and situations beyond school, is a natural, necessary step for career "explorers" to take.

David E. Lindstrom

PAGES 18 THROUGH 32 CONTAINING PHOTOGRAPHS OF WORKERS AND COMMENTS BY STUDENTS WERE NOT REPRODUCIBLE AND WERE REMOVED FROM THIS DOCUMENT PRIOR TO ITS BEING SUBMITTED TO THE ERIC DOCUMENT REPRODUCTION SERVICE.

PURPOSE OF THE POST TESTS

Had the project been carried to its completion as visioned by Ms. Staver, the following post tests would have appeared after the appropriate chapter in the reading booklets. From the way the post tests are organized it must be assumed that each chapter was to deal with one of the agencies or businesses visited by the participating students.

Coast Janitorial Service - Self test

To be taken after reading about Coast Janitorial

CHECK ALL CORRECT ANSWERS

1. Coast Janitorial employs people to:

____wash windows
____clean offices, buildings and houses
____get new buildings to clean
____to learn how to drive
____take good care of buildings

2. A window washer makes:

____$1.65 per hour
____ .75 per hour
____ 5.00 per hour
____ 9.50 per hour

3. Coast Janitorial provides services for which of these states:

____Oregon and Idaho
____Oregon and California
____Oregon and Arizona
____Oregon and Washington

4. People who work for Coast Janitorial must know how to:

____clean floors
____dust furniture
____type, file and do payroll
____clean windows only

5. Coast Janitorial employs

____many people
____only Mr. Scott and his brother
____his daughter
____anyone who wants to work

Bonneville Power Administration - Ross Complex - Self Test

To be taken after reading about the Bonneville Power Administration

CHECK ALL CORRECT ANSWERS

1. The Ross Complex offers jobs for:

____graphic artists
____electrical engineers
____school teachers
____printers

2. There are many types of strength such as:

____friction
____impact
____rubbing
____compression

3. Bonneville has tools or machinery to:

____test the strength of metal rope
____help make layouts
____print
____put tubes in equipment

4. The Graphic Arts Building produces:

____publications
____wire rope
____blueprints
____metal parts

5. To work in the Ross Complex an employee:

____should be an expert in his or her job
____must get along with many different people
____does not seem to need a high school diploma
____needs to train for a particular job.

Tri-Met - Self Test

To be taken after reading about Tri-Met

CHECK ALL CORRECT ANSWERS

1. Tri-Met provides transportation for the public:

____all over the city
____downtown area only
____the Northwest area
____the Southeast area

2. The maps in the office at Tri-Met show:

____how many busses are running
____where the busses are
____how many drivers are working
____how large the city is
____the way to get to the beach

3. At Tri-Met busses are:

____washed each day
____checked each day by a mechanic
____given time to rest
____cleaned each day
____used for field trips

4. The people who work at Tri-Met get to do the following:

____use a large recreation room
____talk to each other
____study
____nobody ever gets to go home
____play pool

5. A bus driver has to be:

____polite
____to be able to handle money
____able to read a map
____get along with people
____good at sports

Post Office - Self Test

To be taken after reading about the Post Office

CHECK ALL CORRECT ANSWERS

1. At the Post Office we saw people learning to:

____sort mail
____read envelopes
____send telegrams
____rewrap packages
____read recipes

2. People rent mail boxes because:

____they have a business
____they don't have a house
____they are new in the city
____they need a place to store their junk

3. People in the Post Office must know how to:

____read
____be on time
____know who wants to get a letter
____follow directions
____be polite

4. When you work at the Post Office you:

____stay out of the way of trucks
____sort airmail from regular mail
____have to get to the coffee machine
____need to know the difference between local and international mail
____have to be honest because there is money in the mail

5. Some people in the Post Office rewrap packages because:

____they don't like your wrapping paper
____some packages have bad wrappings
____they won't fall apart in shipping
____so you can't see what is inside of them

Williams Construction Company - Self test

To be taken after reading about Mr. Williams' Company

CHECK ALL CORRECT ANSWERS

1. The job of Contractor is to:

____make estimates
____repair houses
____remodel houses
____paint houses
____build houses
____repair telephone wires

2. A Carpenter is required to have:

____very little equipment
____a great, big shop full of tools
____a moving van
____a home of his own

3. Mr. Williams said that it was important to:

____do a good job
____keep a good name
____finish your job
____cut people's lawns
____leave junk lying around

4. Contractors need to know:

____measurements
____color mixtures
____how to read blueprints
____the distance from the roof to the sky
____safe use of tools
____the date when the job will be completed
____the requirements for a chauffer's license

5. Contractors need to get along with the following:

____customers
____fellow workers
____the mail man
____farmers

6. Mr. Williams paints because he:

____enjoys painting
____he has lots of experience
____painting isn't hard work to him
____is forced to paint
____likes getting paint on his clothes

GUEST SPEAKER EVALUATION WORKSHEET
7/8 Grade

1. Did the speaker use words that you could understand?_____

_____

2. Did he make his subject interesting?_____

_____

3. List three or more things you learned from his visit._____

_____

_____

4. What would you have him do differently?_____

_____

_____

_____

5. What would you want a speaker to talk about that would be something of interest to you?_____

_____

_____

_____

6. The speaker was good_____fair_____poor_____

PROCEDURES USED IN GIVING THE PRE AND POST PROJECT TESTS

A series of single page descriptions of various careers were collected. These were arranged into two packets, and for each packet a multiple choice reading test was developed. Each student read the packet of job descriptions, then took the test for that set of job descriptions. Near the end of the project year the second packet was read and its test taken.

Sample of Pre and Post Project Tests

VOCABULARY: SELECT THE MEANING THAT BEST FITS THE WORD IN CAPITALS

1. He earned a good SALARY

   A. extra helpers

   B. getting a better job

   C. showing others

   D. regular money for work

2. The LABORER had a fine job

   A. skilled man

   B. unskilled worker

   C. carpenter

   D. mill worker

Etc.

COMPREHENSION: SELECT THE CORRECT ANSWER

As an important member of any construction crew, the laborer assists the building craftsman in many projects occurring at a construction site.

14. Who does the laborer assist?

   A. crew

   B. members

   C. craftsman

   D. none of these

Etc.